OUR WORLDS AT WAR
780
SUPERMAN
ACTION COMICS
PRELUDE TO WAR!
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SCHRA
KOOM
SCHRA
KOOM
SCHRA
KOOM
I'LL TRY THIS AGAIN...

YOU HAVE BROUGHT A *PLANET* INTO MY *SOLAR SYSTEM.* YOU'VE *KIDNAPPED TWO MILLION PEOPLE.*

YOU'VE INVADED MY *HOME* UNDER THE BANNER OF *"PEACE."*

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

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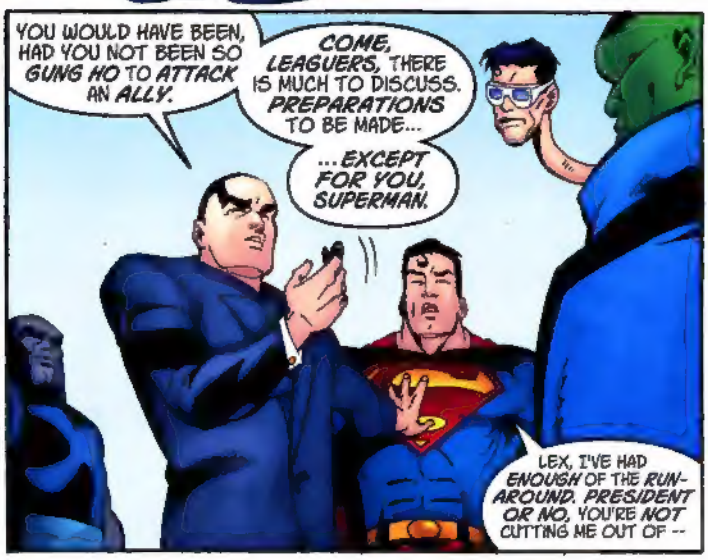
"INVASION." HA! WERE APOKOLIPS TO INVADE THE EARTH, LITTLE ORPHAN --
-- METROPOLIS WOULD BE LITTERED WITH TWO MILLION CORPSES.
AND YOUR "JUSTICE LEAGUE" WOULD BE LITTLE MORE THAN VAPOR.
YOU'RE NOT ANSWERING ME, DARKSEID.
YOU NOTICED. PERCEPTIVE.
YOU HAVE SPOKEN TO MY LIEUTENANTS, I AM CERTAIN. WHAT HAVE THEY SHARED?
IMPERIEX.
IMPERIEX. THE END POINT. THE NULL.
IF YOU KNOW THAT IMPERIEX COMES, THEN THERE IS NOTHING TO DISCUSS. YOU NEED ONLY AWAIT MY ORDERS...
THERE'S EVERYTHING TO DISCUSS.

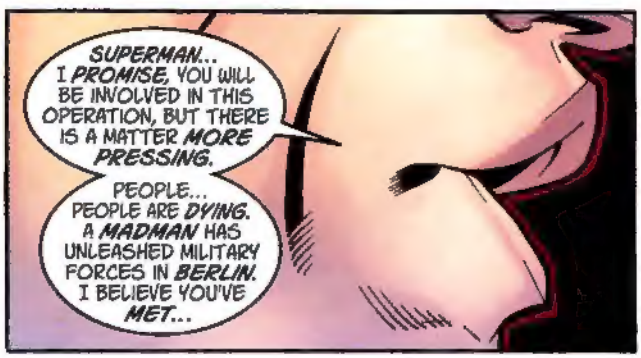
TSCHOWWW
NNNGH!
PLASTIC MAN!
ON IT! KRYPTO-BALL IN THE CORNER -- URRK -- A L'IL HELP?
GOT YOUR BACK!
FIRST STRIKE! EXECUTE THE --
NO. HE'S TRYING TO GOAD US INTO CONFLICT. SUPERMAN IS UNHARMED. CONTINUE TO HOLD --
I'D LISTEN TO THE MARTIAN IF I WERE YOU.
FINALLY... THE INSECT IN CHARGE.
THAT'S "PRESIDENT INSECT," DARKSEID.
PRESIDENT LUTHOR IF WE'RE GOING INTO BUSINESS TOGETHER.

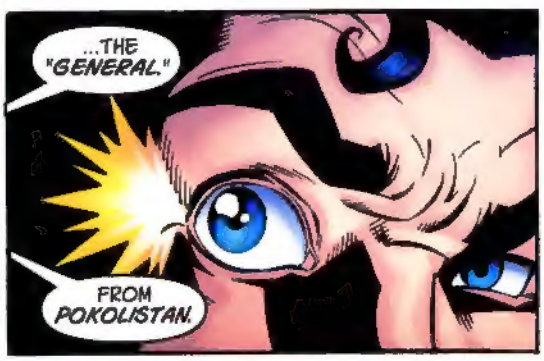
YOU KNEW?!
SERIOUSLY, IT WAS A PLEASURE... NO NEED TO THANK ME --
-- COULD SOMEONE USE THEIR GREAT POWER TO HELP ME FIND MY PANCREAS?

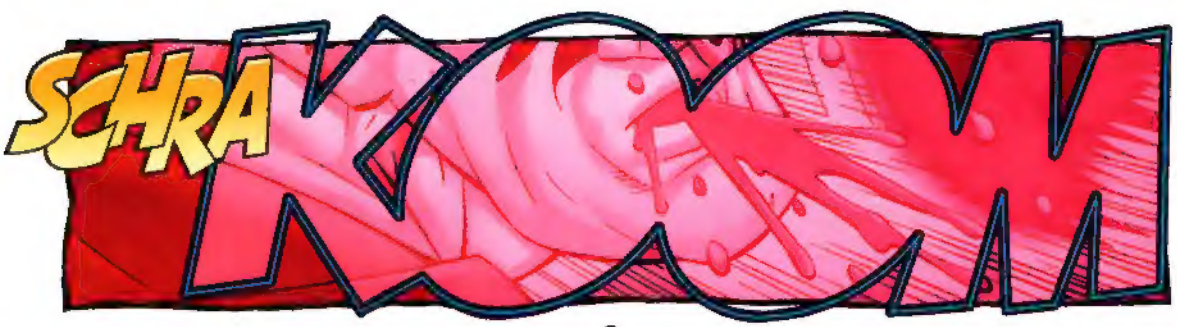
I'M THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, SUPERMAN. OF COURSE "I KNEW."
I TRUST ALL IS ACCORDING TO SPECIFICATIONS?
YOUR TIDES ARE ON SCHEDULE. YOUR MOON HAS NOT SPIRALED INTO THE SUN.

YOU HAVE A GIFT FOR UNDERSTATEMENT. HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE?
DAYS, AT LEAST --
LUTHOR, WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY WEREN'T WE NOTIFIED --?


YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN, HAD YOU NOT BEEN SO GUNG HO TO ATTACK AN ALLY.
COME, LEAGUERS, THERE IS MUCH TO DISCUSS. PREPARATIONS TO BE MADE...
...EXCEPT FOR YOU, SUPERMAN.
LEX, I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THE RUN-AROUND. PRESIDENT OR NO, YOU'RE NOT CUTTING ME OUT OF --


SUPERMAN... I PROMISE, YOU WILL BE INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION, BUT THERE IS A MATTER MORE PRESSING.
PEOPLE... PEOPLE ARE DYING. A MADMAN HAS UNLEASHED MILITARY FORCES IN BERLIN. I BELIEVE YOU'VE MET...

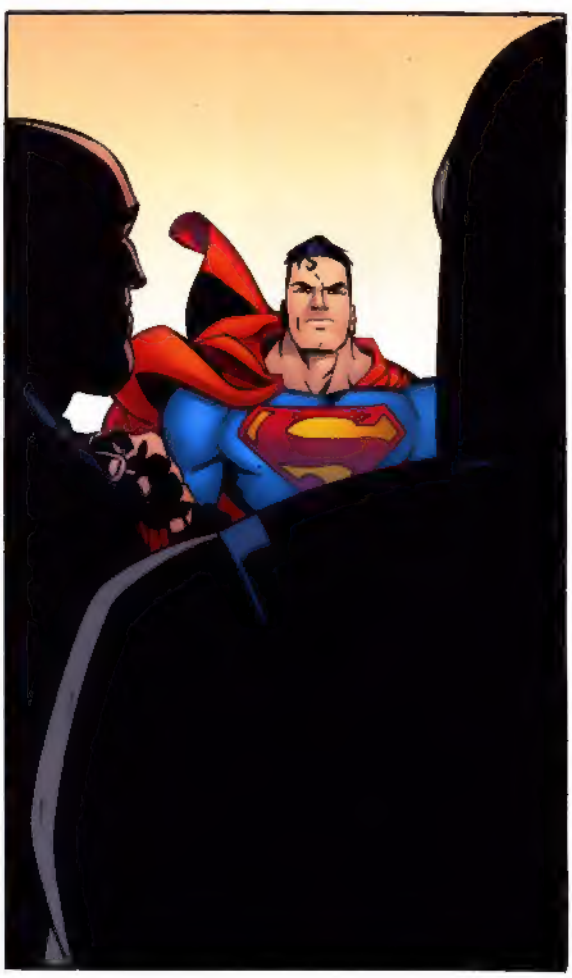

...THE "GENERAL."
FROM POKOLISTAN.

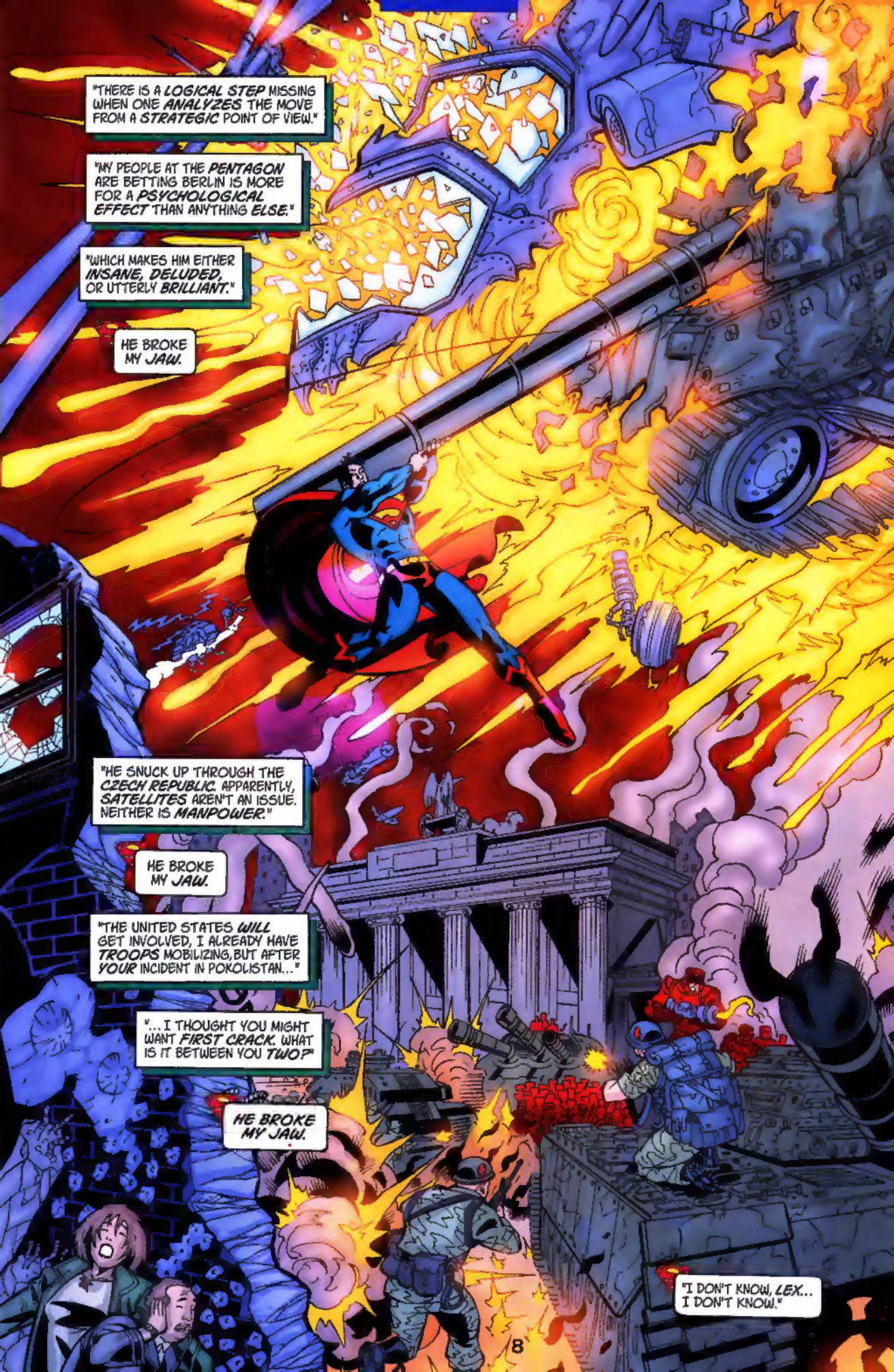

SCHRA
KOOM

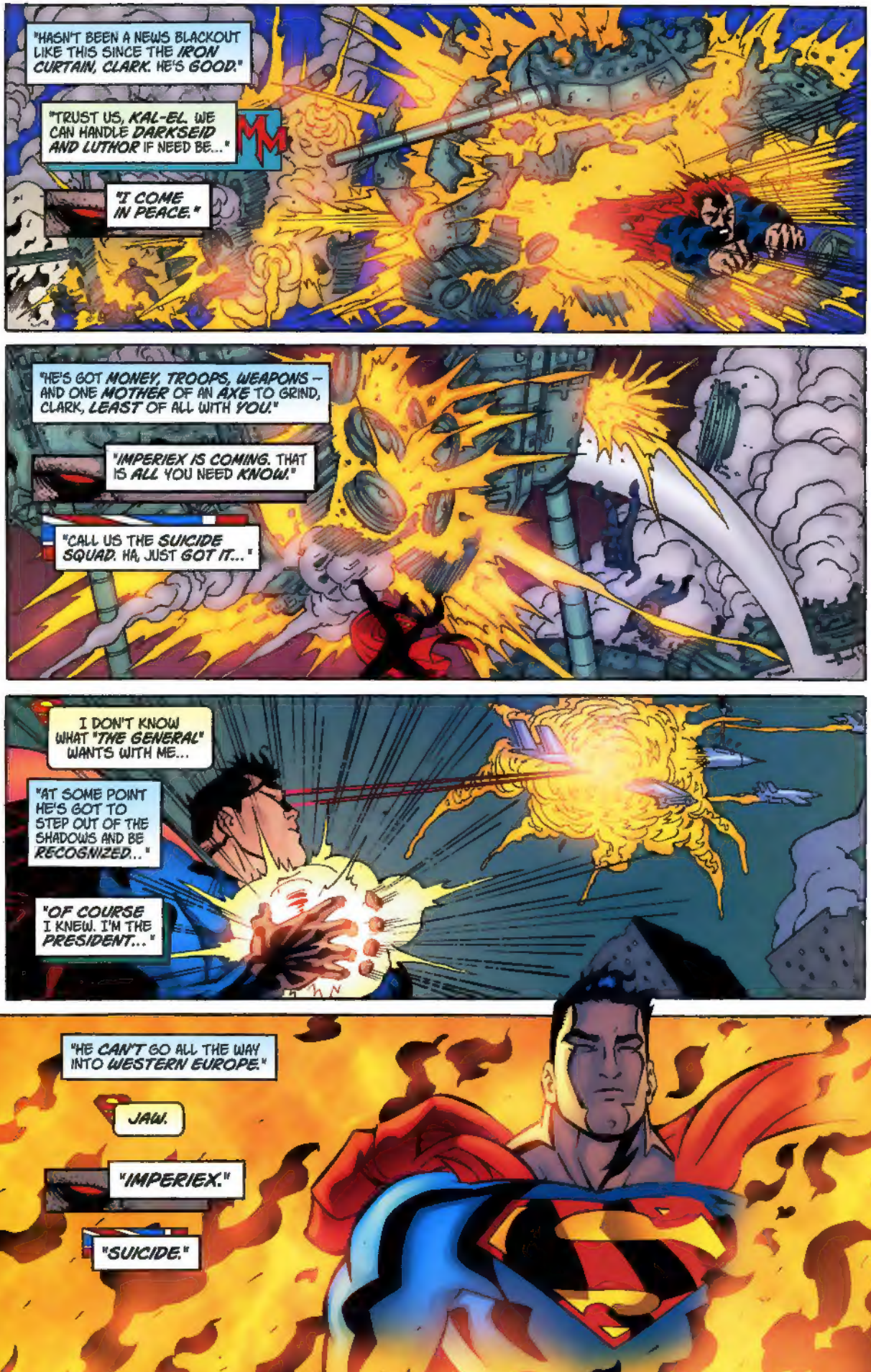
I'M NOT LEAVING.
SUPERMAN, I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN FOR BOTH THE CITIZENS OF METROPOLIS -- AND YOUR -- AHEM -- BELOVED PRESIDENT.
BUT EVERY SECOND YOU STAND HERE POUTING BECAUSE YOUR LEADER IS DOING THE WORK OF LEADING -- PEOPLE ARE DYING IN BERLIN.

THIS IS THE SORT OF CONFLICT THAT STARTS WARS, SUPERMAN...
... AND I'M ASKING YOU TO HELP ME SNUFF OUT THE MATCH BEFORE IT BECOMES A FOREST FIRE.
YOU WILL BE INTEGRAL TO SOLVING THIS "DARKSEID CRISIS," BUT... YOU CAN GET TO BERLIN FIRST. YOU CAN KEEP AMERICA OUT OF CONFLICT FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.
PLEASE.

IF IT MAKES THE DECISION EASIER... I'VE LOCKED THE WATCHTOWER TELEPORTER ON HIS OMEGA BEAM ENERGY SIGNATURE.
HE SO MUCH AS ADJUSTS A CONTACT LENS, AND HE'LL BE ON NEPTUNE IN FIVE HUNDREDTHS OF A NANOSECOND.




"THERE IS A LOGICAL STEP MISSING WHEN ONE ANALYZES THE MOVE FROM A STRATEGIC POINT OF VIEW."
"MY PEOPLE AT THE PENTAGON ARE BETTING BERLIN IS MORE FOR A PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT THAN ANYTHING ELSE."
"WHICH MAKES HIM EITHER INSANE, DELUDED, OR UTTERLY BRILLIANT."
HE BROKE MY JAW.
"HE SNUCK UP THROUGH THE CZECH REPUBLIC. APPARENTLY, SATELLITES AREN'T AN ISSUE. NEITHER IS MANPOWER."
HE BROKE MY JAW.
"THE UNITED STATES WILL GET INVOLVED, I ALREADY HAVE TROOPS MOBILIZING, BUT AFTER YOUR INCIDENT IN POKOLISTAN..."
"...I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT FIRST CRACK. WHAT IS IT BETWEEN YOU TWO?"
HE BROKE MY JAW.
"I DON'T KNOW, LEX... I DON'T KNOW."


"HASN'T BEEN A NEWS BLACKOUT LIKE THIS SINCE THE IRON CURTAIN, CLARK. HE'S GOOD."
"TRUST US, KAL-EL. WE CAN HANDLE DARKSEID AND LUTHOR IF NEED BE..."
"I COME IN PEACE."
"HE'S GOT MONEY, TROOPS, WEAPONS -- AND ONE MOTHER OF AN AXE TO GRIND, CLARK, LEAST OF ALL WITH YOU."
"IMPERIEX IS COMING. THAT IS ALL YOU NEED KNOW."
"CALL US THE SUICIDE SQUAD. HA, JUST GOT IT..."
I DON'T KNOW WHAT "THE GENERAL" WANTS WITH ME...
"AT SOME POINT HE'S GOT TO STEP OUT OF THE SHADOWS AND BE RECOGNIZED..."
"OF COURSE I KNEW. I'M THE PRESIDENT..."
"HE CAN'T GO ALL THE WAY INTO WESTERN EUROPE."
JAW.
"IMPERIEX."
"SUICIDE."

HAS THE EXALTED UNITED STATES OFFICIALLY DECLARED WAR ON POKOLISTAN --
-- OR IS THIS BEING A PERSONAL VISIT?
I WANT A WORD WITH THE "GENERAL."

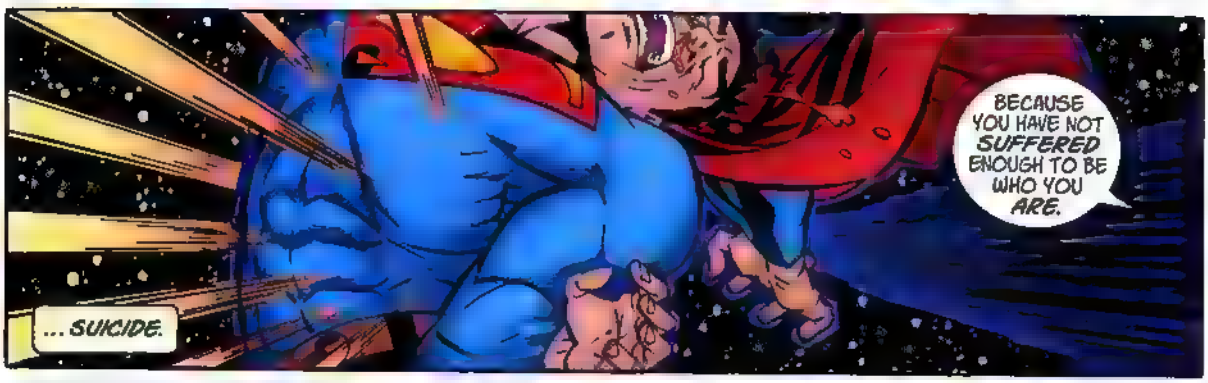
LET'S TALK.
AS YOU WISH.
"SO... THISSS ISS IT NOW, YESSS?"

THE GAME BEGINS... ONLY ONE FATHERRR WILL WIN. ONLY ONNNE.
YES. AS IT SHOULD BE. COME...
IDLE HANDS DO THE DEVIL'S WORK.
CHOOOM
WHY?

SKOWW
BECAUSE I CAN.
I CAN :UNGGH: SEE THAT. FLIGHT. STRENGTH. HEAT VISION.
WHY?! WHY ME?!
YOU ARE NOT A GOOD LISTENER.
PWOOM
SO I WILL EXPLAIN...
:WHOUFF:
...SLOWLY.

I DO...
...INSANE, DELUDED, OR BRILLIANT.

..BECAUSE I CAN.
BROKE MY JAW AND I DON'T KNOW WHY...


BECAUSE YOU HAVE NOT SUFFERED ENOUGH TO BE WHO YOU ARE.
... SUICIDE.

BECAUSE I HAVE SPENT HALF MY LIFE...
WHY?

...LIVING ONLY FOR THE DAY.
WHY ME?
GLLCH!

YOU WOULD KNEEL BEFORE ZOD!
Z-ZOD?

NO! NOO!
THEREFORE... I SENTENCE YOU TO DEATH BY KRYPTONITE. GOD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL...
NO... IT'S NOT TRUE. NOT POSSIBLE.
HFF!
VMMP
WHO ARE YOU?!
I AM GENERAL ZOD!
ZOD DOES NOT EXIST HERE! THERE IS NO ZOD HERE! WHO ARE YOU?!
THWAKK
I AM ZOD!

I AM YOUR DESTROYER!
I AM THE ONE WHO WILL BRING YOU TO YOUR KNEES AND SHOW YOU THE WORLD BEFORE I TEAR IT TO PIECES AND REMAKE IT --
--AS MY OWN.
I DON'T CARE WHO YOU CLAIM TO BE -- I'LL STOP YOU.
HOW EXACTLY ARE YOU GOING TO DO THAT?
KILL ME?
YOU KNOW... H-HOW CAN YOU KNOW UNLESS YOU'RE REALLY --?

YOU MISSED--!
SUPERMAN...
OSH
"...THAT WAS NOT ONE OF MINE."

WHAT WAS THAT?
LISTEN TO ME. IT WAS NOT... MINE.
PERHAPS... THIS IS BEST SETTLED... LATER.
THE UNIVERSE DOES HAVE A PECULIAR SENSE OF HUMOR AT TIMES.
I THINK... INTERESTING TIMES ARE UPON US.

IT BEGINS. PREPARE.
AND SO... HISTORY IS WRITTEN.
LEX! LEX!
WHAT IS IT, PETE--?
SOMETHING'S HAPPENED --!

"-- SOMETHING HAPPENED TO *KANSAS*."

"SOMETHING *CATASTROPHIC*."

JOE KELLY
WRITER

KANO
PENCILLER

MARLO ALQUIZA
INKER

THE END OF

"There are times we sleepwalk through our days, oblivious to the signs around us, until we suddenly wake up and realize that we're not walking at all. We're sliding. Down a greased hill. Towards a boiling pit of... life."
Clark Kent, Daily Planet, June 2001.

THE BEGINNING

Superman Created by JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER

ROB SCHWAGER
COLORS

COMICRAFT
LETTERS

TOM PALMER JR.
ASSISTANT EDITOR

EDDIE BERGANZA
EDITOR

NEXT MONTH:
ALL-OUT WAR!

RE:ACTION

"WAR" CORRESPONDENCE

*"Our Worlds At War" has only begun, and already we've received numerous letters and e-mails worrying that Lois Lane will become a casualty of "War." Ryan Ignatius Pratt of Los Angeles, CA, begs, "Please do **not** kill off Lois," while Ceri Gray (via the internet) writes, "If Lois goes, then so does half the legend." Needless to say, we're in for some tense months ahead, both in the mailroom and on the Internet...*

Dear Re:Action:

I just finished reading ACTION COMICS #776. I enjoyed the "Return to Krypton" saga from SUPERMAN #166-167, ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #589, MAN OF STEEL #111 and this issue...so much that I also reread the reprint stories in SUPERMAN IN THE SIXTIES trade paperback. I found that if I didn't buy any of these issues within two days, they were sold out. I won't be surprised if you make a trade paperback out of this saga as well.

I was so glad to see you go back to the Krypton I remember in SUPERMAN #53 and #146 (first series), with a more lively Jor-El and Lara. And I am looking forward to some of the future Krypto stories. I just hope the dog was housebroken when he was on Krypton.

BOB KARON
EAGAN, MN

*If there's enough demand, Bob, you can be sure "Return to Krypton" will return as a TPB. And Krypto was, indeed, housebroken on Krypton. Unfortunately for Lois and Clark, Earth's yellow sun now gives the pup a penchant for house-**breaking!***

Dear DC:

So that's it? More questions asked than answered? As a wrap-up of "Return to Krypton," ACTION COMICS #776 was a bit of a disappointment.

In this month's first two chapters, any enjoyment to be had from seeing classic bits of DCU/Kryptonian history again was squelched by Lois's insistence on casting herself as the flip arbiter of ironic humor, constantly ribbing her husband over key cultural points regarding the world of his birth parents.

The MAN OF STEEL team pleasantly surprised me once again this month, but any lifted hopes I had were swiftly dashed in this final chapter. Sure, the melodrama between Zod and Kal returned a true Kryptonian villain to our hero's Rogues Gallery once again, as I'm sure there's more of this tale to be told. But as far as this segment of the saga goes, we deserved more than a super-pet.

CHUCK BROUILLETTE
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY

Sorry you were disappointed, Chuck. The thinking behind the storyline's ending was meant to suggest that the only "real" Krypton is the one that you interpret for yourself. That, and we wanted to throw in the super-dog as a bonus! Arf!

Dear Super-Team (re ACTION COMICS #780):

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Krypto is back! You have made my day! I was always disappointed that he had no place in current continuity. Reading about Superboy as a kid (I'm 30 now), Krypto was always my favorite character.

In the past few years, my only complaint with the Superman line was that in order to follow Superman, you had to buy four titles every month. I even recently (and shamefully) considered canceling all of the Superman books to help relieve my ever-strained comics budget, but no longer! Krypto is back, and I'm staying on board!

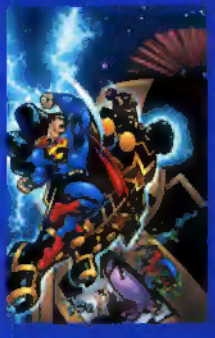
DAVE MANLEY
RALEIGH, NC

*And we're glad to have you with us, Dave. In fact, you can even walk the dog for us when we're not around! A word of advice, though — if Krypto sees another dog or a mailman, do yourself a **big** favor: let go of the leash. Trust us on this one.*

—Mike McAvennie
Fears for Metropolis's fire hydrants.

OTHER PRELUDES TO WAR THIS WEEK:

While Superman battles in Berlin, Kansas goes kaboom, and Linda Danvers is right in the middle of the blast! Find out what's happened to her in SUPERGIRL #59!



Check out the threat that's going through our solar system to get to us in SUPERMAN: OUR WORLDS AT WAR SECRET FILES #1! Along the way, get to know your allies, your enemies and whatever weapons you can lay your hands on!

NEXT WEEK:

SUPERMAN #172

dccomics.com

KEYWORD: DC COMICS ON AOL

Kneel before the cover artwork of Kano and Marlo Alquiza with Tanya & Richard Horie.

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HA HA HA HA HA!!
LOOK AT THEM SCATTER!
THE ANTS! THE PITIFUL, MORTALESS LITTLE CREATURES.!!
THEY STRUGGLE THROUGH THEIR MEANINGLESS LIVES AND NEVER DREAM OF POWER.!!
POWER LIKE MINE!!
AN INVISKID SCAN!"